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REMARKS  
UPON  
Mr. *Carte's* Specimen  
OF HIS  
GENERAL HISTORY  
OF  
*ENGLAND:*

very proper to be read by all such  
as are Contributors to that great  
Work.

In a LETTER to a Friend.

— *Nascetur ridiculus Mus.*



*L O N D O N:*

Printed for J. ROBINSON, at the *Golden Lion* in Ludgate-street. 1748.

(Square, 3*mers*)

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# ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

THE following Letter was wrote  
(immediately upon the Publication  
of the *Specimen* in the Spring  
of the Year 1746.) for the Con-  
viction of a young Gentleman, who  
was a great Admirer of Mr. *Carte's*  
Abilities as an Author ; and it had so  
good an effect upon him, as to pre-  
vent him from throwing away twenty  
Guineas, as he had intended, towards  
the Encouragement of the *New Ge-  
neral History of England*. It is pub-  
lished at this Juncture, as a proper  
Caution

Caution to the Readers of that Work, not to depend too much either upon the Facts or Reasonings of one of the most blundering and inaccurate of Scribblers, to distrust his Principles, and to beware of his Insinuations. As Mr. *Carte's* great End in writing seems to be now fully answered, by the many thousand Pounds which have been so generously subscribed to his Work, he will perhaps think himself obliged to the Author of this Letter for not having sent it into the World sooner, when it might have done him harm in a much more tender Point, than it can do now. For the mere Loss of Reputation is but a Trifle to some Persons, where it does not draw along with it the Loss of Money — Tho' I have not yet seen the new *History of England*, I shall make no Scruple, however, even from

from the Specimen before me and his other Works, of drawing the Character of the *Historian*, and it shall be almost in the very Words, with which the famous *Answerer of the By-stander* (p. 147.) describes the *Sieur Rapin*. Mr. *Carte* is a

“ Writer full of Visions, and who  
 “ hath swelled out a tedious Relation,  
 “ barren of material Occurrences,  
 “ which he calls an *History of England*, with an infinite Number of  
 “ fine-spun speculations *a la françoise*, not so much on Matters of  
 “ Fact, as upon his own Mistakes;  
 “ One who has neither the Knowledge, Learning, Judgment, nor  
 “ Temper necessary to qualify himself for an Historian, but depends  
 “ purely on his Character as a *Non-juror* to recommend his Performance to the *Jacobite* World, for  
 “ whom

( viii )

“ whom *chiefly* he writes, and up-  
“ on whom he thinks himself able  
“ to impose.”

R E-





R E M A R K S  
U P O N  
Mr. *Carte's* S P E C I M E N  
O F H I S  
G E N E R A L H I S T O R Y  
O F  
*E N G L A N D.*

**A**T length, Sir, the Publick has been favoured with a Specimen of Mr. Carte's *General History of England*: But whether it will answer the mighty Expectations, which his good Friends the Tories have so industriously raised of his Work, must be left to Time to discover. However, as I know you will desire to be acquainted with my particular Sentiments upon this small Part of

B his

his first Volume, which he has now thrown out to the World, I'll save you the Trouble of writing to me on purpose, and give you my Observations upon it immediately, with all Freedom and Impartiality, just as they rise in my Mind.

You well know, Sir, that I have always endeavoured after the Character of a candid, rather than a severe, Critic in the Judgments which I may have accidentally passed upon Men or Books; and therefore if my present Animadversions should, perhaps, appear somewhat more harsh than usual, you will be so good-natured as to impute this Change of Stile, not to any Alteration in my Temper, much less to any Envy or Ill-will I bear to Mr. *Carte*, but to the mere Force of Truth, and the great Desire which I have of convincing you, how ill-grounded your Profession is, in-favour of so visionary and incorrect a Writer.

I readily grant, Sir, that a good general History of our Country is much wanted; and could we be so happy as to find a *Livy* to undertake the noble Labour, not only the whole Expence of the Work ought to be defrayed by the Public, but a large Reward likewise be given to the Author as a Testi-

Testimony of our national Gratitude. But *Livys* are not the Growth of every Age and Clime; and something more is required in a good Historian, than mere Zeal for a Faction, and an Affiduity in collecting and transcribing antient Records. — He must have Patience to compare his several Materials together, and Discernment to reconcile their seeming Contradictions; he must have right Notions of the Original of Government, and be well acquainted with the civil Constitution of his Country; he must have a cool Head, an honest Heart, a sound Judgment, a Purity of Diction, an agreeable and perspicuous Manner of expressing himself, and an inviolable Attachment to Truth.— Now how far these characteristic Ingredients are to be found in Mr. *Carte's* Composition, his Friends are much more ready to inform us, than we are able to discover from his own Works, such of them, I mean, as have been already communicated to the Public.

As to the small Piece before me, one might reasonably have expected, that as it was to be Specimen of his *Opus magnum*; as it was designed to be a flagrant Instance, an egregious Proof, how much fitter he was to write the History of his native Country,

than *the Many* who had undertaken the arduous Task before him ; as it was intended to convince his Friends, as well as Foes, how well he merited those ample Sums of Money, which some of our most *puissant Peers*, which whole *trading Companies*, which *mighty Corporations*, which one of our *renowned Universities*, (as is said) had so generously subscribed to his Emolument ; as it was thrown out as a Bait to draw in more Contributions — under all these promising Circumstances, was it not reasonable to expect, that we should have found something extraordinary in it, some interesting Point of our antient History cleared up, some old Errors corrected, or new Facts brought to Light ? but how soon did all these promising Hopes vanish in Smoke, even upon the most cursory Perusal !

The *Subject* our judicious Author has selected, as the most proper for him to display his historical Talents upon (for we cannot suppose, that he would be so unjust to himself, as not to take one of the most striking Parts of his Work) is some Account of the *Druïds*, more particularly of the great Part they bore in the civil Administration of the several States of *Gaul* and *Britain*.

Methinks

Methinks I see you smile at this most happy and critical Choice of his Subject. How may a Man of Mr. Carte's known Principles exert himself in setting off the absolute Power of the ancient *Pagan* Priesthood! How large a Field is opened to him for recommending Church-Authority in general? What Insinuations may there not be made of the Disinterestedness of religious Societies, and the peculiar Advantages which would attend their presiding in Councils, and directing the affairs of State? What an Opportunity is here offered for reconciling his deceived Country-men to the *Papal* Power, as the best *Means of preserving Union between the various Nations that inhabit Europe, and the most effectual Resource in Case of Quarrels between them!* For surely the Excommunications and Interdicts of his *Holiness*, may be found full as beneficial to this great Purpose now, as those formerly fulminated by the *Arch-Druid* himself were.

I shall not venture to assert, that our judicious Author had indeed any such reconciling Scheme in view, when he presented the Public with this flattering Account of the druidical Institution and Power — His real Intentions are best known to himself and

and his bosom Friends. — Only, I think in common Prudence, Mr. *Carte* should have selected a less exceptionable Part of his History at this Juncture, (whilst a *Popish* Pretender to the Throne, supported by *Popish* Powers from abroad, is actually in the Kingdom) and not have given his Enemies so fair an Handle of reflecting upon him, as too great a Favourer of that antient System of Church-Despotism, which once prevailed in this Kingdom.

“ The *Druuids*, says he, were an Order  
“ of Men of the first Quality; endowed  
“ with all that Greatness of Mind, which a  
“ noble Birth, uncorrupted by Vice and  
“ Luxury, naturally inspires; fitted by their  
“ Education, Studies, Reflections, Expe-  
“ rience, and a continual Exercise of their  
“ Talents in the Decision of Cases, which  
“ daily came before them in Judicature,  
“ to determine of all Matters of Right and  
“ Wrong, according to the wisest Rules of  
“ Equity; collected out of all the various  
“ Nations, spread through the wide Extent  
“ of that Country, and related to all the  
“ princely and noble Families, that had the  
“ chief Influence and Government in each;  
“ unconcerned themselves in the Quarrel, by  
“ Means of their Exemption from personal  
“ Service

“ Service in the War, when they thought fit  
“ to use their Privilege ; uninterested in the  
“ Event, by Reason as well of their ordi-  
“ nary abode in Colleges retired from the  
“ World, and at a Distance from all, to  
“ whom they were by Blood related ; as of  
“ the Satisfaction they found in a contem-  
“ plative Life, and the every-way-happy  
“ Circumstances of their Condition, which  
“ left them nothing to wish for themselves,  
“ and no Desire in Nature, but, that which  
“ can never leave a Man of Virtue, the De-  
“ sire of being useful to the World. With  
“ these Advantages, added to the sacredness  
“ of their Character ; the Reverence for  
“ their Persons, which Religion inspired  
“ into a People extremely addicted to it ;  
“ the universal Submission ever paid to their  
“ Advice and Decrees ; their absolute Power  
“ in Sacrifices, and the inexpressible Dread  
“ of their Interdicts, rendred them the fittest  
“ Persons to interpose between jarring en-  
“ raged Nations, and likeliest to do it with  
“ Succeſs, &c. &c.”

This, Sir, is the amiable Picture which our Author has thought fit to give the Public of his *Druſids*, and these ſome of the Ornaments with which he has decorated this most capital Performance. — But whether,

16 *Remarks on Mr. Carte's Specimen*

ther, after all, the Draught be not much more like the Scholars of *Rome*, than the Pupils of *Anglesey* and *Dreux*, you, who are so well acquainted with unsophisticated Antiquity, will easily determine.

However, Sir, lest you should suspect that I have misrepresented Mr. *Carte's* Specimen to you, passed too heavy a Censure upon it, and endeavoured to set his prodigious Labours in too mean a Point of View, I must beg your patient Perusal, whilst I give you an extemporary Examination of his whole Sheet.

I.

" It was *only* after Disasters had actually happened, or when Dangers were imminent, that the *Romans* had recourse to a Dictator, or the Senate enlarged the *Consul's* Power, by charging *him* to take care, that the Commonwealth should receive no Detriment: But the *Gauls*, to guard against all Surprises by sudden Accidents, which might not allow Time for thinking of a proper Remedy, had a standing Provision for the like Purposes."

The

The *Romans*, as you will know, Sir, and as Mr. *Carte* ought to have known, had recourse to a Dictator, *not only* after Disasters had actually happened, but likewise at all other Times, when any Thing was required to be done, which had not been particularly provided for by the ordinary Laws of the Commonwealth. — *The Senate enlarged the Consul's Power, by charging him to take Care, &c!* I will not imagine that our Author has so far forgot his School-Learning, as not to know how many Consuls there were at *Rome*; I would only advise him for the Sake of the Unlearned, of whom a great Number have done him the Honour to subscribe to his Book, to be more accurate for the future in what he commits to Paper, and not to set down at Random, in this Manner, Singulars for Plurals. For sure I am, there is no one who reads this Passage, unless he be already acquainted with the *Roman History*, but will immediately imagine that there was only *one Consul* at *Rome to whom the Senate gave in Charge, that the Commonwealth should receive no Detriment.* — Impolitic *Romans*! to create your Dictators for a Time only, and when there was an absolute Necessity for them! What? had you not *Pontifices* and *Flamins* now

amongst you, *Men of the first Quality, of the prime Nobility, endowed with all that Greatness of Mind which a noble Birth, uncorrupted by Vice and Luxury, naturally inspires*, whom you might have continually entrusted with that high Office? 'Tis true, your Laws had tolerably well provided for *Disasters after they had actually happened*, and for *Dangers whilst they were imminent*. — But how much more masterlike was the Wisdom of the barbarous *Gauls*, as you were pleased opprobriously to term them, or of the inhospitable *Britons*, as your loose Poets were suffered to call them, who, *to guard against all Surprises by sudden Accidents, which might not allow Time for thinking of a proper Remedy, had a standing Provision for these Purposes*, a Set, a whole Order of perpetual Dictators? not one single Man, upon whose well-known Wisdom and uncontroleable Power the State might safely rely in its greatest Perils, but many superior Wsidsoms, many absolute Powers, who, no doubt of it, *uninterested as they were in the Event, by Reason, as well of their ordinary Abode in Colleges, as of the Satisfaction they found in a contemplative Life, and the every-way-happy Circumstances of their Condition*, would never divide into Parties, or be distracted with different Opinions, but would always

always act with one Head, one Hand, and one Heart, *with no other Desire in Nature, but, that which can never leave Men of Virtue, the Desire of being useful to the World.* And tho' once upon a Time it happened, that this sovereign dictatorial Power of the Druids was called in question by the *Æduans*, *to whose Constitution it was nevertheless essential, as it seems, indeed, to have been to all the wisest States of Gaul; and, all the World attended at the hearing of a Cause, on which the Fundamentals of their (that is, of all the World's) Constitution depended,* yet did the Inferiors, that is, the States, as in all Reason they ought, decide in Favour of their Dictators, and pronounced, that in the Matter in Debate, *they had proceeded according to Law and exercised their Prerogative, or absolute Power, justly—As far then as a whole Order of Dictators is superior to one single Dictator, so far is the Gaulish Polity, in this Respect, to be preferred to the Roman!*

## II.

“ The Druids had a Power paramount to  
“ that of the Magistrates, not excepting  
“ even the ordinary Power of the Su-  
“ preme: and seem to have had a con-  
“ stant Charge to inspect their Conduct,

" to take Care the Laws were observed,  
" and to prevent the Mischiefs of a Viol-  
" lation. They could vacate the Acts of  
" the Sovereign, remove such as were put  
" into Office illegally, and appoint the Su-  
" preme Magistrate."

This, Sir, I own is clearly enough expressed, and was the great *Bellarmin* himself to come to Life again, I might venture to defy him to draw a more amiable and striking Picture of the papal Power, even as it was exercised in the 10th and 11th Centuries of the Church. If any Thing be still wanting to finish the colouring, it is amply made up from the Quotation, which our Author, with the highest Marks of Approbation, and without the least *repining*, afterwards, introduces from *Dio Chrysostom*.—“ Kings  
“ were not allowed to do any Thing with-  
“ out them ; nor even so much as to con-  
“ sult about putting any Thing in Execu-  
“ tion without their Participation ; so that  
“ it is the Druids which reign in Effect, and  
“ Kings, tho' they sit on Thrones, feast in  
“ Splendor, and live in Palaces, are no  
“ more than their Apparitors and Mini-  
“ sters in executing their Orders.” How-  
ever, to confess the Truth, here arises a Sort  
of Difficulty to me, which I cannot so  
easily

easily get over, that when these Druids, as our Author has frequently inculcated within the small Compass of this single Sheet, were themselves, oft-times, *the great, the chief or supreme Magistrates, who inherited and exercised Royalty itself, who were very likely Vergobrets and Princes in the other Nations of Gaul*, as well as amongst the *Ædui*— Here, I say, a Sort of Difficulty arises, how these poor States were to act, *when Disasters happened to them, and Dangers were imminent!* their Kings were already become their Dictators, and their Dictators Kings, and consequently they had no farther Resource to fly to for Refuge. This, I am afraid, will be looked upon by mere modern Politicians, as a fundamental Defect in their Constitution; unless our Author will be so good as to help them out of this Difficulty, by asserting that no Misfortunes were ever likely to happen to that State, whose Kings were Philosophers, and its Philosophers Kings. After all, tho' I have a very great Regard for the Order, Beauty, Regularity and Perfection of the ancient *Gaulish*, as well as the old *British*, Modes of Government, and pay an especial Veneration to the political Wisdom of the Druids, yet am I sometimes apt to imagine, that Mr. *Carte* may possibly have overshot the Mark, and suffered his great Affection

Affection to that excellent Order of heathen Noblemen, to get the better with his Judgment, when he is not content of making *Priests* of them only, but has constituted them likewise *Dictators*, *Vergobrets*, *Kings*, hereditary-right *Kings*, hereditary *Legislators*, hereditary *Nobles*, *Augurs*, *Sacrificers*, *Generals of Armies*, *Commanders of Cavalry*, *Princes*, *Tribunes*, *Ephori*, *Philosophers*, and *Academicians*.

## III.

“ The Vergobret was the supreme Magistrate among the Ædui, and under that Title enjoyed all the Authority, which a King had in other States of Gaul.”

An incautious Reader, from the inaccurate manner in which the above Quotation is expressed, will be apt to imagine, that King was the common and well-known Title of their supreme Magistrate in all the other 399 Nations of Gaul. The Romans, 'tis true, in order to do themselves more Honour and to give an Eclat to their Conquests, comprehended all the Superiors of these numerous States, even the Vergobret of Ædui, under their magnificent and general Term of *Reges* [or Kings] but what particular Appellations the Gauls themselves gave these Magistrates

Magistrates is altogether uncertain : only I think it evident enough from the whole Scope of their History, that their Name, whatever it might be, was very far from corresponding with those pompous and extensive Ideas, which we are usually wont to comprehend under the Word *King*.

IV.

" They, the *Ædui*, had another wise  
" Provision — which other States, particu-  
" larly that of *Venice*, have thought worthy  
" of their Imitation : Two Brothers, whilst  
" both were living, could not be made Ma-  
" gistrates, nor even admitted into the Se-  
" nate."

I would by no Means be thought to deny the Fact itself, that such really was the Constitution of the *Ædui*, or that the present Laws of *Venice* have not something like it. — But why must it be supposed, that this latter State *imitated* the former in this Institution, and derived their Wisdom from so obscure and remote a Fountain ? Is it not a natural Provision, such an one as we may reasonably expect to find in all Aristocracies, in all States which are jealous of their Liberties, not to throw too much Power into one Family. I don't doubt but you, Sir, are as well satisfied as I am, that when the

Republic

Republic of *Venice* was first founded, the poor wretched Creatures that fled from the Devastations of their barbarous Enemies, to the Fens and Islands of the *Po* for Refuge, were but very little acquainted with *Cæsar's Commentaries*, or the Polity of the ancient *Gauls*.

## V.

“ It was not the Exemplariness of the  
“ Lives of the Druids, nor the Goodness  
“ of their moral Instructions ; nor was it  
“ their Power in Matters of Religion, or  
“ the Terror of their Excommunications,  
“ which gave them the Authority of Le-  
“ gislators.”

Notwithstanding the great Encomiums, which our Author has been pleased to give us of the Druids, notwithstanding the *Exemplariness of their Lives, the Goodness of their moral Instructions, their Abode in Colleges, and their general Disinterestedness*, they were still but Men, and like their more terrene Brethren, the Priests of after-ages, equally fond and ambitious of Power ; not indeed for its own Sake, that be far from us to suspect, but merely *from that Desire, which can never leave a Man of Virtue, the Desire of*

of being useful to the World. Scarcely, therefore, can the *Roman Conclave* itself (from the same Motives to be sure!) boast of more Bustle, Brigue, Chicane, and Intrigue, than was to be found in the several Colleges of *Gaul* and *Britain* upon the Death of their Pope or Arch-Druid — And so even sometimes was the transcendent Merit of the contending Candidates, that nothing but the longest Sword, a national War, could decide the Superiority between them. *Nonnunquam etiam de Principatu Armis contendunt*, says *Cæsar* — Again, our Author, I hope, will be so good as to excuse my Ignorance, when I ingenuously confess that I know not well what he means, when he gives his Druids *the Authority of Legislators*, much less when he afterwards adds, *that this Authority was the Result of their Birth-right*. I shall not pretend to determine what Mr. *Carte's* Notion of an hereditary Right to the legislative Power of any Nation may be, but thus much, I believe, all thinking and unprejudiced Men are fully satisfied in, that amongst free People, such as, most undoubtedly, were the ancient *Gauls* and *Britons*, no Man's *Birth* could give him a *Right* to impose Laws upon the rest of his Brethren, any farther than he should be permitted so to do by the common Act of the whole Society,

society, who thereby bound themselves to obey his Laws. Such Legislators were *Solo*, *Lycurgus*, and those others whom we so frequently meet with in classic Story — But in what Records do we read that the Druids, (who 'tis certain, from what *Cæsar* expresly tells us, committed nothing to writing) were ever invested with this absolute Authority of prescribing Laws to the rest of their Countrymen ? Judges, indeed, they most commonly were, and Arbitrators, between them in Matters of Property ; but that they were regarded as Legislators, I find no Traces left in the genuine Remains of the Ancients — I grant, indeed, that the Druids had a *Right*, the same *Right* that every other native free-born *Gaul*, or *Briton*, had, to be present in the general and sovereign Assembly of the Nation, and there, together with the rest of their independent Brethren, to examine into the Necessities of the Public, to determine of Peace or War, and to deliberate upon all other Matters wherein the whole Community was any ways concerned — But as to any other Superiority which they might have in this national Convention, except, perhaps, the Right of presiding in it, much less that they were look'd upon as a distinct Branch of the Legislature, our Author, I believe, notwithstanding all his Kindness for

for them, will be extremely puzzled to evince. Had the *Gauls* a regular System, a written Body, of Laws, such as *Lycurgus*, for Instance, provided for his *Lacedemonians*? however, Mr. *Carte's* manner of writing may seem to mislead the unwary Reader to imagine some such Thing, I dare almost venture peremptorily to pronounce that they had not. Is it not far more credible, as was indisputably the Case of the neighbouring States of *Germany* at this time, that natural Reason, together with the traditional Rules and Customs of their Fore-fathers were their only Guides, as well for the Direction of their own Actions, as for judging of other Men's? These their primitive Customs, 'tis probable, they from Time to Time corrected and amended in their several provincial or general Assemblies, as Occasion required; but as to any written Body of Laws, given by the Druids to their Subjects, as our Author all along regards them, the *Gauls* and *Britons*, none, that ever I heard of, has been yet produced.

## VI.

" It is a very mistaken Notion to consider  
" the Druids purely as Ecclesiastics, they  
D 2                          " were

" were Men of the first Quality in these  
" Islands."

I know not what Books Mr. *Carte* may have read, but sure I am, I have met with no Author lately, who has treated upon the Subject before us, who has *considered the Druids purely as Ecclesiastics*. On the contrary, I could name him half a Dozen in a Breath, was there any Necessity of it, who have all considered them in the same Light they have done the ancient Priests of all other Nations, that is, *as Men of the first Quality in their several Countries*; so that if all our new History be like to end in such old worn-out Observations as this, no Matter how pompously they may be introduced, the learned University, which is reported so amply to have patronized the Work, might have spared its Money, and gone no farther than its own Libraries for all the Instruction it is like to meet with here.

## VII.

" In *Gaul*, the Constitution whereof was  
" the same as that of *Britain*, *Cæsar* tells  
" us, that there were three Orders of Men,  
" viz. the *Druïds*, the *Equites* or Gentle-  
" men, and the *Plebeians*; and that the  
" *Druïds*

“ Druids were the first of the other two  
“ Orders.”

Cæsar, 'tis true, does mention the Name of the Druids first, but as to any other Preference which he gives them over the *Equites*, my Edition of his Works says nothing. These are his Words, *In omni Gallia eorum hominum, qui aliquo sunt numero & honore genera sunt duo; de his duobus generibus alterum est Druidum, alterum Equitum:* of these two superior Orders, the one is of the *Druids*, the other of the *Equites*. — Now he who can find any special Marks of Distinction, any Preheminence or Superiority conferred upon the Druids in these general Expressions, must be endued with one of those pervading Genius's which is able to deduce *quidlibet ex quolibet*, and of discerning Meanings in an Author quite contrary to the common Construction of his Language, and such as are absolutely hid from all vulgar Penetration.

## VIII.

“ The Druids composed in those Days  
“ (if I may be allowed to borrow Expressions from more modern Times) the  
“ Principal Part of what has been since  
“ called,

" called, in *France* the Court of Peers,  
" and in *England* the Court or Great  
" Council of Barons. See here in a Constitu-  
" tion founded by the old *Britons*, the  
" first Draught of that which has since ob-  
" tained in this Nation, as it stood before  
" the Name of Parliament was known, and  
" before Burrows were incorporated or ca-  
" pable of having Representatives."

This seems to be a very false Representation of the Matter, and has no other Tendency but to misguide the incautious Reader, and to give the greater Air of Importance to his favourite Druids. The *Gaulish* Nobility, (that is, in general, the whole Body of their native Freemen) as such, were all naturally equal, and knew no other Superiority than what personal Character, or some accidental Employment in the State might confer. They were divided into two Classes, the *Priesthood*, and the *Soldiery* (for by this latter Term I would choose to translate the *Equites* of *Cæsar*) each with its distinct Offices and Privileges annexed to it; but that one of these Classes was *more principal* or superior to the other, we have no Evidence but Mr. *Carte's* mere Assertion to inform us. In their legislative Capacity they were all equal; and for any Thing which at this Time

Time appears to the contrary, in the general Assembly of the Nation, the Vote of the meanest *Eques* was as good, though perhaps it might not carry quite so much Influence with it, as that of the Arch-Druid himself. What our accurate Author therefore asserts, that the old *Gaulish* and *British* Clergy made a distinct Branch of their national Legislature, constituted a different House (*to borrow Expressions from more modern Times*) and were a kind of superior Order to the Laity, is all Fancy, the visionary Product of his own fertile Imagination !

## IX.

“ The particular Charge which the  
“ Druids had in Matters of Religion, was  
“ neither derogatory to their Nobility, nor  
“ incompatible with their Dignities in the  
“ State ; they continued to enjoy their Rights  
“ in both Respects.”

Alas ! what a Pity it is, that the Times are now become so depraved and degenerate, that it should be looked upon as not quite so compatible with their pastoral and religious Functions, for Bishops to be made Lords Chancellors, High-Treasurers or Generals

Generals of Armies, as formerly they were.— For as to the other Part of the Insinuation, that it is now regarded as derogatory to their Nobility, for the Children of Noblemen to have the highest Charges of Religion conferred upon them, this is not true in Fact, as the present State of our Church Preferments might easily have informed the Author. — I dare say, Sir, you are by this Time fully convinced, not only from the Quotation before us, but from many other Instances likewise which have been produced, that Mr. *Carte* is far more conversant with modern Notions and Ideas, than he is with genuine Antiquity. For what were the *Dignities of the State* in those Days, which he talks so much of? *Places at Court* to be sure he means: as if the four Kings of *Kent*, for Instance, had each of them his Lord Steward of the Household, his Lord Privy-Seal, Lord High Chamberlain, his General of the Cavalry, &c. &c.! What fine Times would these have been for our present Male-tontents to have lived in! that Man must have had very bad Luck indeed, who had missed of a Place in one or other of the four hundred Nations of *Gaul*, or the numerous Kingdoms of *Britain*.

X.

“ When the Druidical Institution took  
“ Place, such of the Heads of Clans or  
“ lesser Potentates in *Gaul*, as had a Mind  
“ to instruct themselves in the Arts of Au-  
“ gury and Divination, so useful to strength-  
“ en their ordinary Authority, and procure  
“ them an absolute Submission from their  
“ Vassals, entered into it, and were in-  
“ structed in that Discipline. Those who  
“ were thus initiated, though they still en-  
“ joyed the Title of Princes in common  
“ with the rest, were yet on that Account  
“ distinguished by the Name of Druids :  
“ and being probably still more distinguis-  
“ hed from them by their Learning, Capa-  
“ city, Integrity and Reputation, were  
“ thereupon more particularly intrusted  
“ with the extraordinary Prerogatives above-  
“ mentioned.”

From reading this Passage I am naturally led to suppose, that our Author, in some other Part of his extraordinary Work, intends to favour the World with an exact Account of the Original of this Druidical Institution, by whom, at what Place, and at what Time it was invented ; the Principles upon which

E it

it was founded, the precise Doctrines it established, and to show how nicely adapted its Instructions were as well for the Good of the People, as to teach and propagate such *Arts as might strengthen the ordinary Authority of the Princes, and procure them an absolute Submission from their Vassals.* — But who are these *Vassals* whom our Author mentions in this Place? Now to say nothing of the extreme Impropriety of using a Term (without making the least Excuse for it) which appears not to have had any Existence before the Introduction of the Feudal Law into *Europe*, does he mean by *Vassals*, such as were the actual Slaves of the Princes? But *these* the Laws of War, or the Price payed for their Purchase, or some other Method of Acquisition had already given them an uncontrouleable Power over, so that they were under no Necessity of being initiated into the *Druical Institution to strengthen their ordinary Authority, and to procure them a more absolute Authority* over these poor Wretches. Would he then, by his *Vassals*, be understood to mean the *Plebes*, that third and inferior Order of Men, which *Cæsar* speaks of? But who were these *Plebes*? I hope our Author has given a particular Description of them in some Part of his *great Work.* — However,

left

lest perhaps he may possibly have omitted this Point, either regarding the Subject as beneath his Notice, or because — he knew nothing of the Matter ; I will beg Leave to inform his Readers, that *this inferior Order of Men*, both in *Gaul* and *Britain*, most probably consisted of the Husbandmen and those other Persons, whose Birth and Necessities had led them to practise the few Trades which were at this Time known in their respective Nations ; they were more especially the Freed-men and their Posterity, with very few of the original freeborn Natives of the Country amongst them : for these were all equally noble (unless they had forfeited this Privilege thro' some Crime or Misdemeanor, or had parted with it at gaming) and, like all other Nations of the ancient World, had the utmost Contempt for Trade. *The Plebeians* therefore consisted chiefly of such as had been originally Aliens to the State they now lived in ; they were such as the Bounty of their Lords, or their own Merit, had redeemed from Slavery ; and though they were in general but very lightly respected by the Druids and Equites, were scarcely looked upon as Members of the Commonwealth, and might not, in the ordinary Course of Things, ever hope to be admitted into the great Council of their Nation, yet

had they their distinct Privileges and Exemptions; and what they had once acquired by their Labour and Industry was as much their own Property, as what belonged to the Nobility was theirs: nor does it appear from any Instance in History, as far as I can recollect at present, that the Princes ever looked upon these *Plebeians* as their *Vassals*, had much Correspondence with them, or attempted to procure an absolute Submission from them. — But perhaps after all, Mr. Carte means no more by his *Vassals* than such as were in *Clientela*, as Cæsar terms it, and had entirely devoted themselves to the Service of their Princes or Patrons. — But these were all native Free-men, and by Birth as noble as their Lords themselves; their Dependance was altogether voluntary, and their Obedience rather honorary than servile. When their State was actually engaged in War, the Principles they had been bred up in, and the Oath they had expressly taken for this Purpose, made them always ready to sacrifice their Lives for their Master's Benefit. Such was the Submission which they had voluntarily obliged themselves to pay, and this was all the Duty their Lords required at their Hands. — In general, the *Gaulish*, as well as the *British*, Kings or Princes were merely Governors of Pagi,

Pagi, Shires, or small Districts (of which there were 400 in Gaul, according to Appian's Computation) subordinate to the supreme or national Assembly; their Business was to preserve Quiet and Order amongst their People in time of Peace, and to command the Troops of their Canton, when War was thought necessary, but as to any absolute Submission, which they attempted to procure to themselves in their respective Jurisdictions, I find no Footsteps of it in Antiquity — so far were they from putting themselves Apprentices, as it were, to the Druids (as Mr. Carte insinuates) to learn the wicked Art of enslaving their Subjects! Slavery was the original Product of Asiatic Warmth and Luxury. — Our Ancestors, neither the Britons, Gauls, nor Germans knew any Thing of it, or appear to have had any the least Thoughts of establishing a Tyranny over their own free-born Brethren. — And indeed, so far were these Princes, as the Roman Historians are fond of stiling them, from having any hereditary Right to their petty States, from inheriting Royalty, that 'tis far more probable, they were generally elected to this little Superiority, and still accountable for their Behaviour in it to that extraordinary Council of the

the whole Nation, as our Author calls it,  
*which met annually.*

## XI.

“ It was probably the most aged of the  
“ Order, that retired thither [to Anglesey  
“ and Dreux] from the Cares of the World,  
“ after passing the Vigour of their Life in  
“ Business; for they were active Men  
“ versed in State-Affairs, and of the greatest  
“ Weight in all Councils: .... there too they  
“ employed themselves still usefully for the  
“ Public in the Instruction of young Druids,  
“ and in the Care of those Colleges and  
“ Seminaries.

All this is mere Conjecture, unsupported by historical Evidence, thrown out at Random, and imagined without the least Knowledge of human Nature. For a little Experience will soon convince us, that such People as *have been long versed in Business, who have passed the Vigour of their Lives in State-Affairs, who have been bred up in Royalty, and placed at the Head of the legislative Authority*; a very little Acquaintance with Mankind, I say, will soon satisfy us, that such Persons as these are not very

very fond of retiring from the World, and removing from the Scene of public Busines to teach Schools, to instruct young Druids, and to take Care of Colleges and Seminaries, — Here again therefore, as in many other Places of this Specimen, I cannot but suspect that Mr. *Carte* had his Eye rather upon the present State and Order of Civil Government, than upon his *Cæsar's Commentaries*, or any other Piece of genuine Antiquity. Full of the modern System of *Dignities of State, Treaties, Conventions, Negotiations, Schools, Universities, &c.* he seems to have viewed the Actions of our earliest fore-fathers by this fallacious Glare of Light, and to have laboured to reduce ever Thing amongst them to this deceitful Standard — *Sic magnis componere parva solebat.* But alas ! the People he had to do with knew nothing of all that Parade of Government, with which our present Polities so much abound. They lived (if I may be allowed the Expression) *extempore*, their ordinary Mode of Rule had sufficiently provided for all the common Accidents of Government, and when any Thing unexpected or extraordinary fell out, they immediately endeavoured to procure a Remedy, and to get rid of it, as well as they could. — But as to all those nice Turns and Expedients, those refined

fined Shifts, Arts and Fore-sight, of your *Richelieus* or *Alberonis*, they were happy enough to know nothing of them — What must we think then of all that idle and conceited Stuff which follows in our Author's Specimen —

## XII.

“ Such Instruction therefore carries with it no Implication, that it might in Time debase the Order [of Druids.] For besides that it was continued ordinarily in their own Children, [this is likely enough but mere Conjecture] “ in whom the Nobility of Birth was propagated, no Plebeian could be admitted into their Discipline, [it may be so, and it may not] nor probably any of the Noblesse or less illustrious Gentry.” Why so ! “ Because Mela tells us, that those whom they thus instructed . . . . were *Nobilissimi Gentis*, the Children of Princes and the chief Nobility of the Nation.”

That is, (by Way of a Specimen of our Author's Logic as well as of his History) the old *Gauls* and *Britons* were divided into two superior Orders of Men, the Clergy and the Gentlemen, or the *Druid* and the *E-*  
*quites* ;

quites ; of these the *Druids* were the first or chief, the *Equites* only secondary and inferior ; the latter therefore were only distinguished with the Title of *Nobiles*, or at best *Nobiliores*, the former together with the Princes were all *Nobilissimi* — Now as *Mela* tells us, that those whom the *Druids* instructed were *Nobilissimi Gentis*, it must therefore necessarily follow, that they could be no other than the Children of the Princes and *Druids*, or of the *Druids* and Princes, as our exact Author will tell us they ought to be placed. Q. E. D. You may perhaps object, Sir, that this Argumentation, however close and demonstrative it may seem, does not exclude either the *Plebeians* or the less illustrious *Noblesse and Gentry* from the Benefit of the druidical Institutions — For tho' their Schools might be, indeed, frequented by the *Nobilissimi Gentis*, as *Mela* says, yet was there room enough left for the Sons of other People likewise, as you have different Orders or Ranks of Students in your own Universities, Noblemen, Gentlemen-Commoners, Commoners, and Servitors — Now, Sir, in Answer to all this we have only to make this easy Supposition, that *Mela* originally inserted a *tantum* before his *Nobilissimi Gentis*, and then our Demonstration will be right again ; and if he did not, it was not Mr.

Carte's Fault, and consequently he is liable to no blame upon this Head.

## XIII.

“ Uninterested in the Event, by Reason  
“ as well of their ordinary abode in Colleges,  
“ retired from the World and from all to  
“ whom they were by Blood related ; as of  
“ the Satisfaction they found in a contem-  
“ plative Life — they became “ the fittest  
“ Persons to interpose between jarring, en-  
“ raged Nations, and the likeliest to do it  
“ with Success.”

I believe, Sir, you will not look upon it as any very great Compliment to his Druids, that they are here treated as *uninterested* in the Event, when their own State was going to be engaged in a War with its Neighbours. What is this in reality, but absurdly giving up the Patriot to exalt the Character of the Philosopher ! But do we, in Fact, find that such *Persons as make their ordinary Abode in Colleges retired from the World, are thus uninterested in the Event of Things*, and so much more public-spirited than the rest of their Brethren ? As our Author sometimes pays too great a Regard to modern Notions, and Manners of Behaviour, so here

here, I suspect, he has not had Deference enough for them. Mankind have been always pretty nearly alike with regard to their inward Frame. The same ruling-passions have ever influenced their Actions, tho' they may have had different Objects to work upon ! But by the bye, how come our Druids on a sudden to turn such mighty Recluses, and *to take up their ordinary Abode in Colleges retired from the World*, when but a few Paragraphs before, we saw the Court, the Senate, the Army, the Forum, yea every Corner of the 400 different Nations of *Gaul*, and the various Kingdoms of *Britain*, full of them ?

#### XIV.

“ Such were the Benefits which *Gaul* and  
“ *Britain* received from the Institution of  
“ the Druids ; from a Body of men com-  
“ posed of the prime Nobility, associated to-  
“ gether according to the Rules of druidical  
“ Discipline ; which afforded them a Means  
“ of preserving Union between the various  
“ Nations which inhabited those Countries,  
“ and a Resource in case of Quarrels be-  
“ tween them, better and more effectual  
“ than *Greece* found in her celebrated *Am-*  
“ *phicyones*. ”

And such again, O Europeans ! would be the signal and illustrious Advantages you might receive, could you be persuaded once more to admit the *paramount Power* of the Pope and his Cardinals to bind your Kings in Chains and your Nobles in Links of Iron ; *for these most disinterested Gentlemen would effectually interpose between your jarring and enraged Nations, and are the likeliest to do it with Success* — But after all, if the Druids were indeed such profound Politicians, as they have been here represented, and *thro' the inexpressible Dread of their Interdicts had an universal Submission ever paid to their Decrees*, how came it to pass that they had not united the various Nations of Gaul, when Julius Cæsar first attempted the Conquest of their Country, and immediately driven him and his Legions once more beyond the *Alps* ? Why did they tamely suffer the Roman General to engage their various States singly one after another, and by that Means make an easy Conquest of them all ? It not this some Reflection, either upon the *Wisdom* of the Druids, in not foreseeing that this must necessarily be the Event of their continuing divided on Occasion of this Invasion ; or upon their *Power*, that they had not such an implicit Obedience always paid to their Dictates as Mr. Carte supposes ? For *tbo'*

tho' Avarice, to which, our Author tells us, the Gauls were remarkably given, or the Fire and Impetuosity of their Temper rendered it impracticable for them to continue long at Peace with one another, yet surely was it the Duty of these *Dictators*, these *Princes*, these *Ephori*, these deep Politicians, to have exerted their utmost, their paramount, Authority upon so pressing an Emergency when the Liberty of the whole was at Stake, to have composed immediately all their lesser Differences, and to have united the whole *Gaulish* Militia against the common Enemy. Tacitus ingenuously confesses (notwithstanding what Mr. Carte quotes from *Diodorus Siculus*, that before Cæsar's Expedition their little Princes were generally at Peace with one another) that nothing gave the Romans a greater Advantage over the *Britons*, he might have added, and over the *Gauls* too, than their mutual Jealousies and Dissentions, than their perpetual Quarrels and Engagements with one another — and the Event sufficiently evinces the Truth of the learned Roman's Observation ; for tho' the ancient *Gauls* and *Britons* were very far from being inferior to their Enemies either in personal Bravery, or Numbers, or Resolution to combat for their Liberties, yet this was their great Misfortune, and this the fertile Source  
of

of all their own Misery, as well as of the *Roman Glory*, that they never acted in Concert, or were able to form a common Alliance against the common Enemy — so that to use the emphatical Words of *Tacitus* himself upon the Occasion, *dum pugnant singuli, univerſi vincuntur.*

These Remarks, Sir, occurred to me immediately, upon the first Perusal of *Mr. Carte's Sheet of General History* — If you think them tedious and too bulky, blame the Occasion of their Length and not your Friend, who would have been glad enough to have had his Trouble abridg'd. If they appear in some Places a little hyper-critical, point out my Mistakes with Candour, and be assured that I shall not think myself too wise to amend them. As I don't so much as know *Mr. Carte's Person*, or have ever had any Correspondence with him, you will easily believe that I cannot have the least Malice, or Ill-will to him. I have read the greatest Part of the Works he has formerly published, and consequently have no Reason to envy the Reputation he has already acquired, or is likely to acquire, by them. I exceedingly commend his Industry and Diligence in collecting Materials for his History, and am so heartily his Friend, as to wish he

*of his General History of England.* 47

was better qualified to make a due Use of them. Upon the whole, I cannot but own myself well pleased that he has found such noble Patrons amongst his Party, and so plentiful an Encouragement to go on with his Work, that both Trade and Literature are so happily united in his Favour. For tho' I don't doubt but the Books themselves will soon be as cheap, and as little regarded, as the voluminous Labours of his Friend *Brady*, yet may the Collections, as such, be of the greatest Service to some future *Livy*, who shall do Honour to the History of his Country — *I am, Sir,*

*Yours, &c.*



A P P E N-





## APPENDIX.

JUST as the foregoing pages were printed off, the Author of them had a short opportunity given him of perusing the *New General History of England*. The first place (as was natural) that he cast his eyes upon was the account of the *Druids*, where, he can assure his reader, all the old Reveries, Inaccuracies, and Blunders are still remaining, only with the addition of some other fancies equally visionary and chimerical, as indeed it must be owned that Mr. *Carte* is extremely well versed in the *Art of sinking in writing*. However, in justice to himself, as well as to the great Historian of the Jacobites, the Author of the Letter has thought proper (by way of Appendix) to reprint the Specimen itself, with such other additions and alterations as have been made in it, since its revision by the Committee of the Society of Noblemen and Gentlemen.

G

T H E



THE  
SPECIMEN  
OF  
MR. CARTE'S  
GENERAL HISTORY  
OF  
ENGLAND;

as it was published February 22, 1745-6; together with such Additions and Alterations as appear to have been made in it, in his *General History* published Jan. 1. 1747-8.

ONCE of the powers vested in the *Druïds*, was of a very extraordinary nature, and attended with a trust of the highest consequence: which yet seems a branch of their ordinary authority, and an essential part of the Constitution of some of the wisest States of *Gaule*. It was only after disasters had actually happened, or when

when dangers were imminent, that *the Romans* had recourse to a *Dictator*, or the Senate enlarged the Consul's power, by charging him to take care, that the Commonwealth should receive no detriment: but the *Gauls*, to guard against all surprises by sudden accidents, which might not allow time for thinking of a proper remedy, had a standing provision for the like purposes. The *Druïds* had a power paramount to that of the Magistrates, not excepting even the ordinary power of the supreme: and seem to have had a constant charge to inspect their conduct, to take care the laws were observed, and to prevent the mischiefs of a violation. They could vacate the Acts of the Sovereign; remove such as were put into office illegally, and appoint the supreme Magistrate: of which we have in *Cæsar's Commentaries* a very remarkable instance. The *Vergobret* was the supreme Magistrate among the *Ædui*, and under that title enjoyed all the authority which a King had in other States of *Gaule*; with this only difference, that the power of the latter lasted for life: whereas the *Vergobret's* expired, like that of a Roman Consul, at the end of his year; the *Ædui* having made the office annual, for fear a longer continuance in power should afford any of their Princes means to usurp the Royalty. They had another wise provision calculated for the like purpose; which other States, particularly that of *Venice*, have thought worthy of their imitation: two Brothers, whilst both were living, could not be made Magistrates, or even admitted into the

Senate. Notwithstanding this Law, so wisely providing for the security of their liberties, *Vedelias* the *Vergobret*, being, before he laid down his office, to appoint another who was to execute it upon the expiration of his year, either named of himself, or got the other Magistrates to join with him in naming, his brother *Cotys* for his successor. The *Druïds* hereupon interposed with their Authority, [prerogative] superseded the nomination of *Cotys*; and appointed *Convictolitanus* *Vergobret*. The whole State was interested in the affair; all the world attended at the hearing of a cause, on which the fundamentals of their Constitution depended: and it appears by the decision, that the *Druïds* had proceeded according to law, and had exercised their prerogative justly; the nomination of *Cotys* was declared illegal, and *Convictolitanus* was pronounced the rightful *Vergobret*.

It was not the exemplariness of the lives of the *Druïds*, [tho' really unblameable in all respects, except in what related to their sacrifices, divinations, and superstitions;] nor the goodness of their moral instructions, [gaining them such an influence over the people, as to persuade them to consent to their regulations;] nor [yet] was it their power in matters of Religion, or the terroir of their excommunications, [extorting a forced submission to the laws they prescribed] which gave them the authority of Legislators, [tho' the opinion of their integrity might contribute to the last mentioned branch of their power.] It is a very mistaken notion to consider them

them purely, as Ecclesiastics : they were men of the first quality in these Islands ; and their legislative authority was the result of their birth-right. *Cæsar* begins his discourse about them with observing that in *Gaule*, the constitution whereof was the same as that of *Britain*, there were three Orders of Men, *viz.* the *Druïds*, the *Equites* or Gentlemen, and the *Plebeians* ; that these last were of no consideration in the State ; never admitted to any Council of particular Nations, or to any general Representation of the whole body of the people of *Gaule*, nor consulted on any occasion. He says that the *Druïds* were the first of the other two orders, and were all *in magno honore*, as their President had the *summa auctoritas* ; they presided in all Acts of Judicature, and were at the head of the Legislature ; they were the *great*, the *chief* or *supreme Magistrates*, and the most distinguished of their nobility. They composed in those days, (if I may be allowed to borrow expressions from more modern times,) the principal part of what hath been since called, in *France* the *Court of Peers*, and in *England* the *Court or Great Council of the Barons*. See here, in a Constitution founded by the *Old Britons*, the first draught of that which hath since obtained in this nation, as it stood before the name of *Parliament* was known, and before Burroughs were incorporated or capable of having Representatives.

The particular charge, which the *Druïds* had in matters of Religion, was neither derogatory to their nobility, nor incompatible with their dignities

dignities in the State: they continued to enjoy their rights in both respects; they inherited and exercised royalty itself. [There are instances enough in former days, besides those noted ones of *Anius* in *Greece*, and *Zoroaster* in *Bactriana*, of Kings that have executed the functions of Priests, at the same time that they reigned as Monarchs. It was indeed the general practise of all parts of the world, for Princes to preside in all rites of Religion and Augury; and when particular institutions for those purposes began to take place, we see that the *Curetes* in *Crete*, the *Corybantes* in *Phrygia*, and the *Cabiri* of *Samothrace*, were all of the race of *Aemon*, *Uranus*, and other *Gomarian* Princes, those Lords of half the habitable world. *Cres*, the son of *Jupiter* was king of *Crete*, as well as one of the *Curetes*: *Faslon*, another of that deified monarch's sons, was president of the *Cabiri*: the *Druuids* (I am apt to think) were descendants of the same race, and of the line of *Pluto*, from whom the *Gauls* in general gloried in being descended; but as this cannot be supposed to be fact, with regard to the whole nation, it seems meant more particularly of the *Druuids*, who would naturally preserve their own genealogies. The *Gauls* opinion of this descent of theirs, was founded upon the relation of the *Druuids*: and the Chieftains of their clans being initiated into the same discipline, furnished a colour for the whole nation to put in a claim to the same descent, as being generally of the same family with their respective

spective Chieftains. But however they were descended, the institution of the *Druïds* at least was formed upon the same plan as that of the *Curetes.*] *Divitiacus*, a Prince of the *Ædui*, whose credit was great among all the nations of *Gaule*, who is so often mentioned, and always with esteem, by *Cæsar*, and who was upon occasion General in chief of the *Æduan* armies, was (as we are told by *Cicero*, who knew him well) a *Druid*. His brother *Dumnorix*, commander of the *Æduan Cavalry*, seems likewise to have been of the same Order; and this character of his to have been the ground of his excuse for not attending *Cæsar* into *Britain*, because he was *religionibus impeditus*, hindered by the rites of religion, in which he was obliged to officiate; it being the peculiar business of the *Druïds*, *interpretari religiones*, to judge in matters of augury, and to officiate in all sacrifices and rites of religion; all which are included in the word *religiones*. It is very likely that the *Vergobrets* and Princes in other nations of *Gaul* were likewise *Druïds*; *Cæsar*, who knew them better than any other writer extant, assuring us, that they were men of the first quality.

My notion of the matter is, that, as Fathers of families in the early ages of the world, were the first sacrificers, and presided in all Acts of religion; so the same presidency naturally continued to be exercised by the Heads of *Clans*; which are only families multiplied, and extended into several branches. [This will soon appear by a particular instance, to have been the constant usage

usage of the *Hebrides of Scotland*, from the remotest ages down at least to the time of *Hecataeus*, if not of *Diodorus Siculus*, who quotes him for the relation.] This seems to have been the practise of the Heads of *Clans* in *Gaule*; who, when for their common defence, they united together to form particular States, under the ordinary government of a Senate and the extraordinary one of a Common or General Council, meeting annually, or assembled on special occasions, came to be styled Princes; as they really were in their respective territories, and are under that title frequently mentioned by *Cæsar*. When the Druidical institution took place, [which was the same, at least in substance, with that of the *Curetes*, into which *Jupiter*, *Mercury*, and all the first *Celtic Emperors* entered, and which seems at first to have been confined to their family;] such of the Heads of *Clans* or lesser potentates in *Gaule*, as [upon the extinction of that race of Monarchs, were left to a freer and more unlimited exercise of their authority, and] had a mind to instruct [to perfect] themselves in the arts of augury and divination, so useful to strengthen their ordinary authority, and procure them an absolute submission from their vassals, entered into it, and were instructed in that discipline. Those who were thus initiated, though they still enjoyed the Title of Princes in common with the rest, were yet on that account distinguished by the name of *Druids*: and being probably still more distinguished from them by learning, capacity,

city, integrity, and reputation, were thereupon more particularly entrusted with the extraordinary prerogatives above mentioned.

[This notion of the Chiefs of Clans and Heads of Tribes among the Gauls being *Druuids*, is not a little countenanced by a relation which is given us by *Parthenius* — then follows a long-winded, impertinent love-tale of Xanthus and Erippe, much fitter for the Book of *Erotics* from whence it was transcribed, than a serious History which is to convey truths worth knowing to posterity.]

In all institutions whatever, where knowledge is requisite, instructions are undoubtedly necessary: and for this purpose certain seminaries were erected for the education of *Druuids*, as at *Dreux* for *Gaule*, and in *Anglesey* for *Britain*. It was probably the most aged of the Order, that retired thither from the cares of the world, after passing the vigour of their life in business; for they were active men, versed in state affairs, and of the greatest weight in all Councils, as we see in the instance of *Divitiacus*: there too they employed themselves still usefully for the public, in the instruction of young *Druuids*, and in the care of those Colleges or Seminaries. Such instruction therefore carries with it no implication, that it might in time debase the Order; for, besides that it was continued ordinarily in their own children, in whom the nobility of birth was propagated, no Plebeian could be admitted into their discipline, nor probably any of the *Noblesse* or less illustrious Gentry.

For *Mela* tells us, that those whom they thus instructed, whom they kept to hard study and a continued exercise of their memory for twenty years together in a close retreat, were *nobilissimi gentis*, the children of princes, and the chief nobility of the Nation.

This will probably make people less wonder, if not less repine, at that authority, which *Dio Chrysostom* thought exorbitant, and complains of their exercising over Princes; whose Actions they had a power, like that of the Spartan *Ephori*, in controlling. "Kings (says he) were  
"not allowed to do any thing without them;  
"nor even so much as to consult about putting any thing in execution without their participation; so that it is the *Druids* who reign in effect, and Kings, though they sit on thrones, feast in splendour, and live in palaces, are no more than their Apparitors and Ministers in executing their orders." But notwithstanding this heavy complaint, it will appear to be a very wise institution, and admirably adapted to the then circumstances of *Gaule* and *Britain*. *Gaule* was inhabited by [(as *Tacitus* says,) sixty four different nations; but he reckons only the most considerable, whose community was made up of several distinct, though united, Nations. For *Appian* informs us, that, taking in small as well as great, there were in all] no less than four hundred different nations; who formed together one aggregate body, and met in a general Council once a year, in order to exercise and maintain their union. This was a proper expedient

dient to preserve peace among them ; but it was not effectual enough ; since before Cæsar's coming thither, there scarce passed a year but a war broke out, on occasion of depredations committed, opposed, or returned by some or other of those different nations. What the avarice, to which the Gauls were remarkably given, or the fire and impetuosity of their temper, rendered it impracticable, or did not allow time, to prevent, the interposition of the *Druïds* served very usefully to compose and keep from continuing.

They were an order of men of the first quality ; endowed with all that greatness of mind, which a noble birth, uncorrupted by vice and luxury, naturally inspires ; fitted by their education, studies, reflections, experience, and a continual exercise of their talents in the decision of cases, which daily came before them in judicature, to determine all matters of right and wrong, according to the wisest rules of equity ; collected out of all the various nations spread through the wide extent of that country, and related to all the princely and noble families that had the chief influence and government in each ; unconcerned themselves in the quarrel, by means of their exemption from personal service in war, when they thought fit to use the privilege ; uninterested in the event, by reason as well of their ordinary abode in Colleges, retired from the World, and at a distance from all to whom they were by blood related ; as of the satisfaction they found in a contemplative life, and the every-way-

happy circumstances of their condition, which left them nothing to wish for themselves, and no desire in nature but, that which can never leave a man of virtue, the desire of being useful to the world. With these advantages, added to the sacredness of their character ; the reverence for their persons, which religion inspired into a people extremely addicted to it ; the universal submission ever paid to their advice and decrees ; their absolute power in sacrifices, and the inexpressible dread of their interdicts, rendered them the fittest persons to interpose between jarring enraged nations, and the likeliest to do it with success. They did so accordingly, as occasions offered ; regardless of their own safety, and despising danger, where the peace of their country was at stake, and the public good required their mediation, " they threw themselves between embattled armies, eager to engage, advancing with drawn swords, and extended spears to wreck their fury upon one another, put, by their wise remonstrances, a stop to their rage, making their weapons drop out of their hands, as it were by enchantment, and thus prevented the combat : so highly doth Mars reverence the Muses, so much can wisdom prevail over animosity, even among barbarous Nations," is the reflection of the Greek Historian (*Diodorus*) at the end of this relation. Such were the benefits which *Gaule* and *Britain* received from the institution of the *Druids* ; from a body of men composed of the prime nobility, associated together according to the rules of the Druidical discipline ;

cipline ; which afforded them a means of preserving union between the various nations that inhabited those countries, and a resource in case of quarrels between them, better and more effectual, than *Greece* found in her celebrated *Amphictyones*.

[The *Gauls* had a general Council like that of *Greece*, in which the Representatives of all their different nations met, to concert measures for their common good, and provide for the preservation of their union. But the two powerful factions of the *Ædui* and *Arverni* contending (like the *Athenians* and *Lacedemonians* in *Greece*) for the chief sway in the government of *Gaule*, and working continually to draw over the lesser nations to their sides, occasioned the resolutions of those Councils to be too much directed by a party-spirit ; which afforded new matter of complaint, and, instead of composing, inflamed the quarrel. War in such cases became unavoidable, and might have been carried to strange excesses, and spread so generally as to produce an entire dissolution of their union, if the *Druuids* had not interposed to make an accommodation.

They did the same good office in *Britain* ; whose constitution was formed upon the same plan, as that of *Gaule* : and they did it with better success ; because they there prevented those wars, which in *Gaule*, not able to hinder their breaking out, all their busines was to compose. The *Britains* had their *Common Councils*, where the deputies of their different people met, as they did in *Gaule* : and it was in one of these, in *Communi Concilio*

*Concilio* (as *Cæsar* says) that *Cassivellan* was chosen Commander in Chief of the forces drawn together to oppose the *Romans*. But there is no reason to think them privileged here from those defects, under which they laboured there :] nor is it to be conceived how such a number of little nations (like the *Clans* of the *Highlands* of *Scotland*, or the *Septs* of *Ireland*) should be for ages together united ; (for notwithstanding their multitude of Kings, Princes and Potentates, *Diodorus* says, they were generally at peace with each other) without the influence and authority of the *Druids*.

The collegiate life which the *Druids* led, far from rendering them morose or awkward, served only to improve their politeness, by daily conversations with persons of the same rank with themselves ; whose minds by their studies and reasonings on subjects of morality, were fitted with noble sentiments ; and who had added to their other accomplishments, a knowledge of all useful parts of learning. When they went abroad into the world, they appeared the same men of quality, that they were before their retreat, &c. This last paragraph immediately follows the conclusion of the Specimen, but is so much of a piece with it, and so entirely to the purpose, that I thought it would be a pity to deprive the reader of the pleasure of so great a curiosity.

*The E N D.*











